Civil Rights History Project
Interview completed by the Southern Oral History Program
under contract to the
Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History & Culture
and the Library of Congress, 2013

Interviewee:	The Reverend Dr. Samuel Berry McKinney
Interview Date:	April 17, 2013
Location:	Seattle, Washington
Interviewer:	David Cline
Videographer:	John Bishop
Length:	01:48:53

John Bishop: We're rolling.

David Cline: Okay. So, today is Wednesday, April the seventeenth, 2013. We are in Seattle, Washington. This is David Cline from Virginia Tech, and the Smithsonian's [National] Museum of African American History and Culture, and the Library of Congress, and the Southern Oral History Program. Today I am doing the interview, along with John Bishop, who is our videographer, of Media-Generation and UCLA. And today we have with us Reverend Dr. Samuel Berry McKinney. And thank you so much for joining us today.

Samuel McKinney: Thank you.

DC: Reverend McKinney, if we could start, if you could tell us a little bit about your childhood, the family you were born into, and I know that you were born into a church home with a strong civil rights background. So, I'm curious to hear how that shaped you, as you grew up.

SM: My name is Samuel Berry McKinney, as was indicated. I was born December 28th, 1926, in Flint, Michigan. My father was a Baptist minister, who was born outside of Gainesville, Georgia, on July 19th, 1892. And he was one of twelve children. His father, Wade Hampton McKinney—and that was my father's name also, and my brother's, and his son—was a Georgia sharecropper. We moved into Georgia from South Carolina.

When my father was eighteen and in the fifth grade, he was encouraged by his pastor of the St. John Baptist Church in Gainesville, Georgia, to further his education. He was eighteen and in the fifth grade. So, he went to the Atlanta Baptist College in 1910, which became Morehouse College in 1914. And I have somewhere his high school certificate. Because at that time, there were not many public high schools for blacks or colored or Negro, or whatever we happened to be at that time, and it was usually in the private sector of schools, which were organized by fair-minded people after the Civil War to educate the recently freed people bound in slavery.

In 1916, he received his high school diploma, and in 1920, he graduated from Morehouse College with a B.A. degree. He was accepted at the Rochester Theological Seminary in Rochester, New York, where he continued his education. But let me back up just a little bit, so you can get a flavor of what was going on at Morehouse at the time.

DC: Right.

SM: I indicated that there are many people who came south to try to help the people recently freed from slavery. In 1881, [phone rings] two sisters from [phone rings]—

JB: Why don't we pause for a second?

[Recording stops and then resumes]

JB: Okay, we're rolling again.

DC: Okay, so you were talking about Morehouse.

SM: Yes. It was really organized in 1867, and it was Augusta Baptist College. And then, it moved to Atlanta and became Atlanta Baptist College. And in 1914, [0:05:00] it became Morehouse College, named for Henry L. Morehouse, who had been the executive of the—it was then the Northern Baptist Convention, later to become the American Baptist Convention that we know today.

A lot of young people and many others came south, white, to join in that movement to train and educate many people. Two young ladies came down from New England, and I'm trying to think of the school they attended. But they organized a college for women in the basement of the Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta, and it became Spelman College. They were modeled after the Harvard, Yale, you know, they would have a university for men and then a college for women, and Spelman was to fit into that category.

These two sisters, Giles and Packard—I can't remember their first names—called upon one of their schoolmates who had married well, Laura Spelman Rockefeller, to help fund this this school. And Spelman College was Spelman Seminary until 1929. In 1929, there was quite a merger of schools in the country. So many people had appealed to Rockefeller for help, he sat down and came up with a grand master plan. Instead of having all these schools, where we can combine them, let's do so. So, that's where Union Seminary in New York came into being.

But in Atlanta, there were several black institutions. And they didn't lose any of their autonomy, but there were asked to work together in a unified fashion. So, the Atlanta University system was organized, with Morehouse as the component for me, Spelman for women. They were still independent. Atlanta University would be a graduate school. And they had to fight to

retain their name in Atlanta, because others wanted that name to be more associated with whites than with blacks.

I'm saying all that to say that in 1916, a young lady from Birmingham, Alabama, named Annie Ruth Berry, my mother, came to Spelman. She was the youngest of six children, and four girls, all who had attended Spelman. And Spelman did not become a college until 1929. I mentioned about the Rochester Theological Seminary. It 1929, it combined with Colgate. Colgate, a hundred and some miles from Rochester, had a division for training ministers. And so, it moved to Rochester and became Colgate-Rochester.

But getting back to Spelman, my mother entered Spelman Seminary in 1916, and she became one of thirteen or seventeen women who technically graduated from Morehouse, which was a college. Spelman didn't become a college until 1929. Rockefeller poured a lot of money into Spelman, [then it] filtered out to the other schools. My parents met on the campus because they had a lot of classes together. And her background was a little different. My father came up a poor boy. His father was a sharecropper. My mother's father was a Baptist minister.

And many blacks at that time listened to Booker T. Washington, who said to "let your anchor [0:10:00] where you are, build where you are, strengthen the land where you are, and let your roots down where you are," is what it boils down to. And many people in Alabama took that seriously. My grandfather was one, and he somehow owned a lot of land and gave it to his children. I don't know what my mother did with hers, but when I asked her about it, she ignored me. So, in other words, we won't touch that. But when Dr. King marched from Selma to Montgomery, every place he stopped along the way was on land that was owned by black people, so he was not an intruder at any point.

DC: And that was well planned out, I assume.

SM: Um-hmm, yes. And there are people who question, and rightly so, some of the philosophy of Booker T. Washington. Being as separate as fingers are, but yet united, did not set well with a lot of people and still does not. But he did insist upon people looking out for themselves and owning land. And this, I understand, my grandfather did. So, my parents met there, and my mother finished, one of thirteen or seventeen women who technically finished Morehouse, and that was in 1921.

DC: I was going to say, but he also, at the same time—talking about your grandfather on your mother's side—he also insisted, it sounds like, that his children, even his female children, get an education.

SM: Yeah.

DC: Yeah.

SM: Yes. One son, the older son, went to Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, which at that time was, like Morehouse, all male. But it's coed now. The next son, James, was sort of a rebel. I guess that happens in most families. He stayed in Birmingham and worked for the Tennessee Iron and Coal Company, steelworker, until he retired and passed.

And so, my mother's older sister—my mother's mother died when my mother was two years old, and so, their older sister, who was seventeen years older, filled in and helped to rear her and set some standards for her. And they were, became part of what some sociologists have called "Black Puritans," black women who rebel against the notion that any black woman was fair prey for any white man sexually, and they wanted to make sure that their children did not fall prey to that sort of doctrine and they stood for religious and moral purity in every way.

And so, when my father asked my aunt for my mother's hand, he had to jump through a lot of hurdles for her. But she did live—in 1929, she came to live with the family. I'm saying all

that because my mother also finished Columbia Teachers College and taught at what is now Jackson State—it was Jackson College in Jackson, Mississippi—and then in a school that no longer exists, Roger Williams College, in Nashville, Tennessee. And that's where she was teaching when she and my father married.

My father's first church was in Flint, Michigan, the Mount Olive Baptist Church. He went there in 1923. They married in 1924. My brother showed up in 1925. I came along in 1926. In 1928, my father was called to the Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, [0:15:00] a church he served for thirty-four and a half years until he passed in January 1963. Although they retired him at the end of 1962, he passed the 18th of January, 1963. He served that church well.

But going back to his college. The only places where the blacks who attended the Ivy League schools could teach were in the historically black colleges. And so, the persons who were able to get an education at the Ivy League schools had to go south, and many of them brought their ideas and things they had been exposed to. One of the strong things that came into Morehouse was the emphasis upon social justice, making society better and making people better, enabling people to stand erect on their feet.

So, Dr. John Hope, who was he president of Morehouse for many years—I think he was the president during my father's ten years. He looked like a white man, and some people thought he was. So, he was able, like Walter White of the NAACP, to move through some circles in society, and some people didn't even know he was there. And they were looking for this colored man, and he was [laughs] looking, too. But they just set some standards. They did lay within, plant within this school a desire for justice, the best training possible. So, the emergence of somebody like a Martin Luther King, Jr. was not a surprise. So, that's when my father came up and what he was exposed to.

DC: Was there reading in the Social Gospel?

SM: Yes, yes. And they—

DC: How would you describe what that means, what the Social Gospel is?

SM: It means—it's based upon, in the Old Testament, the sixty-first chapter of Psalms. It's when Jesus quoted, and it's recorded in the fourth chapter of Luke, "of the spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he is anointing me to proclaim the gospel to free the captives and set at liberty those who are bound to declare the acceptable year of the Lord." And after Jesus read that in his hometown, he closed the book up and handed it back to the attendant and said, "Today this has been fulfilled in your hearing." During that period when my father was in college, there was a fellow who taught at Rochester Theological Seminary for a while, Walter Rauschenbusch. You've heard of that name?

DC: Yes, I have.

SM: And he was declared one of the apostles of the social justice, Social Gospel, setting at liberty, freeing up people who have been bound, and to declare the truth. And so, my father came up under that kind of instruction, although Rauschenbusch died while he was still a student. Rauschenbusch's mark was left on quite a number of the students and others.

And the person who became president of Morehouse four years before I entered there was Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays, who was out of South Carolina, went to Virginia Union, then Bates College, and then earned a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. And he was the president [0:20:00] when I was there. I entered in 1944 at age seventeen. And when I became eighteen, Uncle Sam was upon me. And I tried to avoid it, but the process of escaping wasn't as defined as it is now.

One of the classmates, one of the fellow freshmen, was a fellow from Atlanta, a little fellow. We called him Squirt. His name was Martin Luther King, Jr., was in the same freshman class. He was fifteen. I'm not taking anything from him, but he was able to enter college at that age because World War II was on, student enrollments were down, and especially in an all-male institution. We, as freshmen, noticed that there were over four hundred of us and only fifty other classmen. So, some of us decided there would be no hazing, because as freshmen, we had—[laughs]

DC: [Laughs] You had the numbers.

SM: We had the numbers to back it up. But in the state of Georgia, they came up with the idea, to boost enrollments that if you—and it wasn't limited to men—but if you took a test in the eleventh grade and passed it, you could go automatically, you could bypass the twelfth grade and go directly into college. And that's what Dr. King did. His sister, Christine, who is the only surviving member of the family, was right on time with her entrance, so they entered college at the same time and graduated at the same time.

DC: What was fifteen-year-old Martin King like?

SM: I guess any other fifteen-year-old.

DC: [Laughs]

SM: But he was what they called a city student. He lived in the city. And he was driving a car before most, and so he drove to the campus. It's interesting to note that, to my knowledge, he took part in every oratorical contest and never won. That's kind of hard to believe.

DC: [Laughs] It is.

SM: But it happened. He then went to Crozer Theological Seminary right outside of Philadelphia, and from there to Boston University. And we have talked about and laughed about

it. I had the opportunity to go to the church in Montgomery before he did. And I told him he ought to be glad for the Movement it didn't happen, because I did not have, at that time, a commitment to nonviolence.

I grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. I was eighteen months old when my father went there, and it was there that I saw him speak out against injustices, work on programs and efforts to open doors for people in the same spirit of the social justice movement. If there was injustice, you just didn't turn your back and walk away from it. You addressed it, or at least *undressed* it, so people could see it and know about it.

DC: And your father had hosted some great minds at his church in Cleveland—

JB: [ ]

[Recording stops and then resumes]

DC: Stop every few minutes and save the file.

JB: Okay, we're back.

DC: I was curious who came as guests to your father's church.

SM: Oh, well, he had people like A. Philip Randolph, Walter White of the NAACP, many people of that stature, Mordecai Johnson, who was president of Howard University at that time, and also a Morehouse graduate, and sort of a mentor-older brother figure to my father when he was in college. He had people like that, so I heard a lot of these people, growing up.

And there was an organization, FOL, stood for Future Outlook League, [0:25:00] that led campaigns in Cleveland: Don't patronize places where you cannot work. And that challenged a lot of people. They had milkmen back in those days, you know, left a bottle of milk on your front doorstep. But they boycotted that until they broke down the—

DC: Early boycott.

SM: Um-hmm.

DC: Yeah.

SM: They challenged the Cleveland Transit System, just before World War II broke out and hired people. I remember a lot of buildings, big empty barn-like buildings. I didn't know what they were. But then, when World War II started and all, lights went on, and they were producing things for the war effort, and a lot of people went to work. There was another massive influx of people from the South. And my parents were part of that, what they call, one of the first major, around World War I, to take part in the movement northward. In fact, my father was in the Army for fifty-nine days at the tail end of World War I, long enough to get some benefits from that.

DC: Okay.

SM: They didn't approximate what it was like after World War II. That's the best G.I. Bill that the country's had. I think if you can disrupt people's lives and put them in that, the least you can do is give them an education or a job or something. My brother and I were both able to finish college on the G.I. Bill.

DC: Okay. So, we were just talking about you being drafted, and you ended up in the Army Air Corps. Is that correct?

SM: It was the Army Air Corps. It's not Air Force. It's a separate unit. But the G.I. Bill was, if you were in military service on September 2nd, 1945, when the war officially ended, you were entitled to one full year on the G.I. Bill, after that, one month for each month you were in service, not to exceed forty-eight. So, that made it possible for my brother and I both to finish college on the G.I. Bill, and my father could save his money for my sisters when they went to college.

DC: What—could I just ask a little bit about what it was like serving in the segregated military at that time.

SM: Uh. [Sighs] [Laughs] It was—well, let me describe it like this. I was in a segregated Army the whole time I was there. After we had finished basic training at Sheppard Field in Wichita Falls, Texas, we were shipped—some of us were shipped to Yuma, Arizona. And the train took a circuitous route to get from Wichita Falls. It went far west, then south to El Paso, then out across New Mexico into Arizona. But we did stop—um, it'll come to me—a town in West Texas, where we stopped.

The train stopped, and we got off for a lunch break. This was in pre-plastic days. You had cardboard plates, wooden forks. And somebody said, "Hey, come here and look!" And we looked from where we were in the colored dining room into the white dining room. There were tablecloths, linens, silverware, and German prisoners of war sitting down to the table, eating. We had on United States Army uniforms, [0:30:00] and these were supposed enemies of our country. But because they were white, that's how they were treated. And no respect for us.

And I asked somebody—I was upset with what I saw—asked somebody how far was it from where we were to Cleveland. They said, "About eighteen hundred miles." And they asked me, "Are you thinking about going AWOL?" I said, "I'm thinking about going AWAY." [Laughs]

DC: [Laughs]

SM: That sums up a good—better. We were in the Army, but in a segregated unit in the Air Force. And on the bases where we were—well, if you're on an Air Force base and an enlisted person, you did not have to salute anybody under captain, because you have to be an officer to fly a plane. And you'd be walking around like that all the time, but—except when they

made new lieutenants. And they made the last class at Yuma when we were there. Shortly after we got there, somebody said, "Line up." We said, "For what?" They said they had the habit of giving a dollar to the first enlisted man who saluted them. So, you saluted him, and got a dollar with this hand.

But they had people assigned to the various units based upon what they did. For instance, if you were a mechanic on the line, they all stayed together. Except they had what they called a Squadron F, where all the blacks, whatever they did, had to stay there. And I found out I was part of the overhead for the Squadron F. It was not a good or a happy feeling. And they only respected us with the uniform on.

DC: Both on and off the base? Did you get to go off the base?

SM: Oh, yeah. Yeah. But they had in town the Colored USO and the White USO, and you had to stay there. We went to—we shipped from Arizona to Bakersfield, California. And I discovered one thing. We could hitch a ride into town. You had no trouble getting from town back to the base. But there were a lot of southern whites up in that area, also. And we would line up outside the gates, you know. And they'd drive up and, "Where you from?"

And I noticed that one night I was the only person left out there. Most of the fellows were from places in the South, and most of these whites were, too. "Get in here!" And I found when I said I was from Ohio, I was left out on the road. So, I said, "Well, the next fellow who comes by here, I'm going to be from Mississippi," and that's what I did. "Get in here!" And he was from Mississippi.

DC: [Laughs]

SM: And he asked me questions I couldn't answer, so I faked sleep. He finally asked me where I was getting out, and I told him.

DC: [Laughs]

SM: But they stopped shipping blacks or coloreds, or whatever we were known as then, to Europe. And then, stopped shipping us overseas, I mean, over to Asia, as well. And then, we were shipped from Bakersfield, California, all the way cross country down to Florida. And people were re-enlisting so fast that I didn't notice it when I first went in, that the [0:35:00] regular Army, on payday, the regular Army was paid first. And then, the more people that re-enlisted, the further back—the lowest private in the regular Army was paid before the top civilian Army, as they called it, or the Army of the U.S., is what most people were during the war.

So, they finally came up with some things, and one of them was everybody drafted in 1945 had to be out by Christmas of 1946. So, I was able to figure out how much time I had left, and went back to school. I didn't have enough time to start all over again, so I was in the pre-law track, so I followed that until I graduated from college. Then I went to Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, New York, for three years.

DC: Did you think you would purse the law at one point?

SM: I was—I had planned to be a lawyer. But then Morehouse was a historic religious institution, so there was a required course in Bible that was taken. And Professor George Kelsey, I don't know, you know sometimes people say, "You're preaching to me." I didn't know but he was speaking to me. He brought up the fact that a lot of fellows were thinking about being lawyers, and that some of them were considering the ministry, and how were they going to reconcile the two?

And then, he said, "The law can only function after something has been done." For instance, he said, a woman who's complaining about being harassed or brutalized by her husband

or male friend. And the police will say, "Well, I can't help you until he hurts you," and sometimes it's too late. He said, "The law functions on the back end. Religion functions on the front end. As one thinks, so one is. Thought precedes action." And somehow I couldn't shake that, nor the analogy that he used: "What should you do? Put an ambulance in the valley to catch, to take people, after they've fallen over the cliff, to the hospital? Or put up a fence so people *don't* fall off?" Well, that resonated, and I couldn't shake that. And I understand that had an impact on others, as well.

DC: Did you get to know Dr. Mays, as well?

SM: He influenced quite a number of us. He told us when we first got to school, and there were a lot of—World War II was on. There were a lot of white women who were driving buses and streetcars, and he told us not to get into any argument. But if we had a problem with the person, male or female, make a mental note quickly of their name and badge number, and get off. Come back and tell him about it. And we did. We found out that his contacts in New York and Atlanta, as really being an outpost—

JB: Who was this person?

SM: Benjamin Elijah Mays was the president of Morehouse from 1941 to 1967. And not only kept the traditions of high scholarship and speaking out for truth and justice, but he modeled a lot of it. And there were those who said that anybody who had come up in the school under Mays could have done what King did. I disagreed with that.

Because when we were growing up, Joe Louis was champion, [0:40:00] heavyweight champion. A lot of people, you know, they were riding on his fists and his victories. My mother's sister, Anita, who I told you sort of was caught up in this Puritanical thing of hers, she

felt that boxing was sinful. And then I told her, you know, Joe Louis was born in Alabama. Then, "Oh?" She was from Alabama. She still didn't like it, but she listened.

When he was fighting, it was like a nice warm summer day, people found the longest extension cord and would bring the radio—this was before television—out to the front porch, and you could walk up and down the street and not miss a thing that was going on. The same thing happened when Jackie Robinson went into baseball. I grew up in Cleveland, which was in the American League, and Larry Doby was the first black. He was on Cleveland's team in the American League, and you could walk up and down the street and not miss anything!

When Joe Louis knocked Max Schmeling out, we had a next-door neighbor, who and my aunt were very good friends. They thought alike. She got out on her front porch because she couldn't stand that sinful boxing. But she had a sister who was visiting her from Mississippi, and that lady had to weigh close to four hundred pounds. She literally shouted the front porch down! And we were pulling boards back, and her legs were all skinned, but she just was so happy! Now, a lot of blacks could not celebrate like that *in* the South. The very concept of a black man beating up a white man? No.

DC: But did people celebrate behind closed doors?

SM: Oh, yes! Oh, yes! But we were out in the street, and when—Max Schmeling had been one of Hitler's boys. So, the Jewish community supported whatever celebrations there were about *his* defeat. And this was an impactful time. We had a famous neighbor lived about five or six doors north of us. I never saw him there, but his mother and father and younger brothers and sisters and cousins—Jesse Owens lived in Cleveland. I never saw him in the house.

But, you know, it's the impact that they would have with—kids, you know, going up and down the street, when they got in front of his house would stop. "On your mark, get set, go!" He

wasn't there to see you run, but that impact of his presence was something. And that's the kind of impact we had at that time.

DC: Interesting. Finding these various role models and openings in the—

SM: Yes, um-hmm.

DC: Yeah, cracks in the door of Jim Crow.

SM: Um-hmm.

JB: Let's pause for a second.

[Recording stops and then resumes]

JB: We're back.

DC: Okay.

SM: Yes, I'm saying all this to say that I grew up in a community, it seems, that the Cedar Avenue YMCA in Cleveland at that time had its hands on or could touch just about any black youth in the community, and that was very helpful.

DC: So, when you went to seminary, then, did you have a sense already what kind of ministry you would be called to?

SM: Yes, the models that I had had, being folks like my father and some of his friends, and like Dr. Mays and Mordecai Johnson, who was the president of [0:45:00] Howard University, was also a Baptist preacher. And many of the folks I was exposed to—I didn't know them all, but many of those I was exposed to were those worth emulating. And that's what I wanted to do. The idea of a mega-church and all that was unheard of then, although there were large churches, and my father's church had, at the height of his ministry, had over three thousand members.

And he would also bring—I think from 1936 through ’46, he brought for the church anniversary in January Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., so we got exposed to people like that. And I remember when he became the pastor of the church and when he was elected to City Council in New York and then Congress. So, I was exposed to people of that nature. And then, Dr. Mays would bring to the campus, as often as he could, people that he felt would be a great source of inspiration to the students. So, that’s a good part of my life. I don’t know which—

DC: And did you stay in touch with Martin King after he went on to Crozer and you went into the Army or the Air Corps and then on to seminary?

SM: Yes. Yes, he made one trip to Seattle, at our invitation, and that was the last time he traveled by himself because, he told me, the near misses and escapes he had had, he was sure there were some assassins out there. But after he came here, this was—he said after his trip here, it was his last trip anywhere by himself. We invited him here to speak of the brotherhood of the church, and he accepted it. This was in 1961.

Now, in 1962, we had a big world’s fair here in Seattle. So, what is now the Seattle Center was kind of under construction for that event. So, we knew that our facilities were too small to house it, and the fellow who was the executive of the Presbytery for Seattle suggested that I approach Seattle First Presbyterian Church, which is in downtown Seattle. They had an old facility at that time that seated over three thousand. And we were given what I thought was a solid handshake agreement and understanding.

And then, when we got closer to the time and started advertising, I got a letter from the ruling body of the church, stating that we could not have the event there because we had not followed the proper protocol in signing up to use it and all of that. So, we asked for a meeting. And we went to the meeting, several of the men from the church.

And the fellow who was the head of the church council or Presbytery or whatever they call it—I guess he was about six, two, had flowing mane of white hair. He was a lawyer. He had the kind of voice that could strike fear in the judge *and* the jury. "You know you did not follow proper protocol." You didn't do this, you didn't do the other. "And therefore, you cannot have use of this facility. Do you understand that?"

And we didn't answer, but he said it anyhow. And then, he tried to soften his tone. He said, "But we know [0:50:00] that you spent some money on your advertisements and some other things. Just give us a bill, and we'll pay for that."

And I guess something rose up in me, and I said, "We don't want your money! We didn't come down here for your money!" Said, "We never *saw* these documents that you said we refused to sign or didn't sign. We didn't *hear* about them until you started broadcasting what you're doing." But I said, "But we're not going to waste our time or your time." I said, "Dr. King will come. He will speak." And I said, "We'll have to tell the world about what you did." "Well, tell the truth!" I said, "Nothing but the truth, so help me God!"

We walked out, and at that time—have either of you been in Seattle any length of time?

DC: Not any length of time, just a little bit.

JB: I lived in Seattle until 1960.

SM: Oh, well, this is prior to I-5 going through downtown Seattle. So, the First Presbyterian Church is up at 8th and Madison. And we walked right down the hill to the—oh, what's that building? It's ACT Theatre now. But since then, the freeway has taken a strange route through downtown. It took the properties that some people wanted to get rid of and get a good price for. But we went right down there and put money down on having the event there, and it did happen there.

Just before I retired in 1998, in the mail I had—there was an envelope, and it said First Presbyterian Church. And I looked at it and I tossed it in the circular file. But then, something told me to go back and look at it, because it wasn't a label on there. It was typed. And I said, "Well, what would these folks want?"

And I opened it, and the content of the letter was simply that, "Thirty-seven or thirty-eight years ago, a grave injustice was done to your church and to you, and we wish to apologize for that." Well, I got on the phone and called the minister and told him I'd like to come down and meet him." He said, "I think I'm a little younger than you. I'll come up there." We're at 19th and East Madison, and they're 8th and Madison.

So, he came up, and I told him, "You know, a lot of whites say that this is unnecessary because their ancestors never owned slaves, so we don't owe you an apology for anything. That's what some have said." And I said, "And not even apologize for white privilege, those feelings that certain things are automatically yours because of who you are."

DC: Sure.

SM: But we appreciate what the young man did. I don't think he's there now. But it was a gesture. He was at my retirement banquet, and I introduced him to the congregation and others who were there and thanked him for it. And they set up some relationship between the young people.

DC: Okay.

SM: But I was glad to see that something like that did happen.

DC: If thirty-eight, thirty-nine years later, yeah.

SM: Yeah, better late than later.

JB: Yeah, but we still have to make reconciliation, incidentally, for four hundred years ago, a hundred years ago. So, it's necessary.

SM: Yeah, and I still believe in reparations. It doesn't have to be to give me any money, but to set up a—the Japanese were, because of what happened to them at Pearl Harbor, as a result of Pearl Harbor, there have been apologies and financial things, because I was told—we can see from up here Renton, Boeing Field. And I understand there were about maybe several Japanese families that owned that land right over there for farming, and [0:55:00] it was taken away from them.

DC: Of course.

SM: And down at Puyallup, where they have the state fair, that's where a lot of the Japanese who lived in the area were herded right after Pearl Harbor. And if you're going to apologize for that, if you can say that you're sorry and *mean* it, it means that you recognize that injustice did take place. And part of the healing process—and that's part of being prophetic, is just not only calling or focusing a spotlight on the injustices that were done, but also making it possible for healing to take place. And forgiving and forgiveness is a part of the healing process. And when that happens, then we'll begin to get somewhere.

DC: This is jumping ahead in time, but do you remember James Forman's "Black Manifesto" in 1968, the call for reparations?

SM: Yeah.

DC: What did you think about that call to the churches and the synagogues?

SM: Yeah. It was a part of the, I guess, evolutionary process of people's eyes opening and recognizing that holding people in slavery for four hundred years and not batting an eye about it, and the South acting like that they didn't lose the Civil War and this is a part of our

culture and our heritage. I have a problem with that. I still do. There are those say, "Get over it." I say, "I will." "When?" [Laughs]

DC: Um-hmm.

SM: Yeah. You might have some other questions.

[Recording stops and then resumes]

JB: Okay.

DC: Let me ask you, because we sort of, we skipped a little bit to when you first came to Seattle to Mount Zion, and then what kinds of social justice issues did you find that needed to be worked on here?

SM: Well, let me see. Every part of the country has been infected with the poison of racism, and the great cardinal sin of the nation has been and still is the matter of race. We don't live in a post-racial world. The white people who originally came out to this area, from what I understand, came from the middle South, Tennessee, Kentucky maybe, portions of Virginia, down into Oregon and up here. There was a law that wasn't repealed until 1926, the year I discovered that made it illegal for blacks to permanently settle in the Oregon Territory. I didn't know about this until I moved out here. Just putting it in historical perspective. Thomas Jefferson, was he the second or third president? I think he was third.

JB: I think he was third, too.

SM: The great lover of black women. Was approached by representatives of, um—who was the great French general?

JB: Lafayette?

SM: No, no, no. He became head of France there for—in exile.

JB: Napoleon?

SM: Yes. Napoleon had someone approach Jefferson and told him that he had access to land west of the Mississippi where they had thought about [1:00:00] establishing a New France. But after the slaves in, uh—

JB: Haiti?

SM: Haiti, yes, rebelled. They had to get out of there real fast. He was willing to sell it to him for fifteen million. Had never set foot on it, had never seen it. And Clark—those two fellows came out here, and about twenty states were carved out of what was the Louisiana Purchase, doubling the size of the United States, and the big discussion was whether this would be free country or slave country.

DC: Right.

SM: And I understand part of the—well, when I came out here, there was no I-5, but there was 99, still is, was the main thoroughfare up and down the West Coast. And a portion of it, going north of Seattle up to the Canadian border, was called the Confederate Highway. There was a man named George Washington Bush—I don't think any relation to the Bushes that once occupied the White House—who led a wagon train of folks west from Missouri. And when they got to Portland, they were told they couldn't permanently settle there, but if they crossed the river to Fort Vancouver, they could tell them about land that was being homesteaded up around Puget Sound.

Let me fast forward a bit. I had to speak to a group once in Arlington, Washington, or somewhere up there in the mountains. And they'd had a happy hour or something, There was one fellow inebriated to the point of being obnoxious and all like that, but, "Before you speak, I want to know what have blacks contributed positively to the state of Washington?" I told him, "Now,

if you sit down and fasten your seatbelt, I guarantee you, when I get through telling you, you'll be sober."

DC: [Laughs]

SM: And he was quiet from that point on. They had a process that you could not permanently settle in the Oregon Territory. But it was a slow, laborious process. The sheriff had to escort you from where you were to the next county. And then, it would take you two years to get from there, and like that. Well, I guess they got tired of enforcing it. It wasn't repealed until 1926.

JB: I think that that law—I live in Portland—parts of that law were still in force in World War II, and they made exceptions to them, so blacks who worked in the ship plants could bring their families from the South, which was a real shock to me when I moved there and heard that story.

SM: Yeah?

JB: Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt.

SM: Oh, no, no, no! You just told me something. They had stopped enforcing it to a degree, because there are two black churches in Portland, I think Bethel AME and Mount Olivet Baptist, were organized in 1910 and 1911. So, they had stopped really enforcing it to a degree.

But George Washington Bush and his company crossed the Columbia, and they were told that there was land they could settle, homestead, up around where the state capitol is, around Lacey, Washington—Olympia. But when they came up, a lot of people, I understand, started saying, "The neighborhood is changing," [laughs] and ran them—there had been some argument between Canada, the United States, and Britain about what the northern boundary of the United States would be, and I guess it's the 49th parallel. [1:05:00]

But they ran them back so fast they committed what a friend of mine calls caucasoid errors. There's a part of the Canadian mainland that juts beneath the 49th parallel, Point Roberts. And schoolchildren who live there have to travel thirty miles one way, sixty miles round trip daily to go to school in Whatcom County, which is right on the Canadian border. And the closest the United States and Canada or Britain came to a war after that was about some pigs in the San Juan Islands. But one of George Washington Bush's sons was in the last territorial legislature and in the first state legislature of the state of Washington.

DC: Interesting.

SM: So, I was able to tell this brother, I said, "Now, you want to know what did we contribute? If it hadn't been for this black man coming across the border, what is now the state of Washington could have easily become a part of British Columbia." And there were some people in the audience who [ ].

But I'm saying all that by way of background. When I came here, there were a lot of people who had come here from different parts of the country, and this area was on the surface better than what they left. Now—

DC: And, I'm sorry, what year were you called here?

SM: I came here in—I received the call the latter part of November, 1957.

DC: '57.

SM: But I moved here and began the first Sunday in February, 1958. I have something I did on my own, and I've passed it on to other ministers, younger ones, so I could maybe help them. If they could find out where many of the members of their congregation migrated from, it'll tell you a little bit. I came here from—I pastored in Providence, Rhode Island, for three years and three months, and our older daughter was born there. The people who migrated back during

World War I were basically from Virginia. During World War II, they were from North Carolina. I grew up in Cleveland, and that migratory pattern was parts of Georgia, and Alabama definitely, and Kentucky, Tennessee, and some people out of the western part of Virginia, coming through Roanoke into Columbus, Ohio. Detroit drew people from a lot of places because of the car industry. Chicago was the dumping ground of Mississippi.

And coming out here, I discovered that most of the people who migrated here during the World War II, I'm not talking about the people that the military brought, were from west of the Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma. And I—[1:09:26] I'll say it anyhow—discovered that many of them, they're more backward. And just checking it out, Dr. King never mounted a serious effort west of the Mississippi. Now, he received a lot of support from people in California and other places. But I tied this up, so I can get my hands on it, with what I call the Juneteenth Factor. [1:10:00] Are you familiar with Juneteenth?

DC: Um-hmm.

SM: I had never heard of Juneteenth until I was in the Army in Texas in basic training. And the nineteenth of June, they gave us a day off, and I said, "What's this?" "That's your Emancipation Day." And then, some of them thought I was crazy. I said, "From what?" They said, "Slavery."

And I said, "Well, we—" in Ohio, we had always celebrated January 1, because Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect January 1, 1863. And many churches have what they call "watch meeting" services, and the origin of that was people were gathered in churches and other places, counting off the time, so when the clock struck midnight, 12:01, 1863, we were technically free, those in the states that were in rebellion against the United

States. Now, the word did not get to Texas, or they did not release the word, until June 19th, 1865.

And then, it didn't make sense for me to, you know, go off the base in celebration of your freedom, and that's the only time you could use the amusement park, but you had to be out of there by six p.m. What kind of freedom is that, now? And I told some people, I was just teasing when I said it, "I now understand why you're so backward." [Laughs]

DC: [Laughs]

SM: Two years later, the news—working two years as a slave when you were free. And then, if you listen carefully to some of the people who are mad at Obama being elected president, they're talking about seceding from the United States. The governor of Texas raised that possibility. That's part of what the Civil War was about, not necessarily freeing us, but about breaking up the Union. So, we're not in a post-racial nation yet. And I don't have to be angry and mad to state this. So, bringing people into the twenty-first century has not been easy. I'm saying all of this to understand this place.

Yet, with all the military facilities around the country, prior to World War I, there were only two army forts, I understand, where interracially mixed couples could live: Fort Lewis, Washington, and Fort Dix, New Jersey. Certainly not Fort Hood, Texas, or Fort Benning, Georgia. They have changed since then.

So, the things that brought people here. Our church was organized in 1890, one year after Washington became a state. And so, there were people here, and I asked them how did they get here, what brought them here? There were some who were trying to get to get as far away as they could, and here was a place. Right over there, you saw the south end of Mercer Island. But right up there in those hills there's a lot of coal. I had to go over there to Sunset Hills cemetery today,

this morning, for a graveside service. But we went by a street called Coal Creek Parkway. That's just not a name pulled out of the air to give a fancy feel to suburbia. There is a lot of coal still up there.

I wouldn't know how to get back there now, but some years ago, I was taken up there and shown a mass grave. And most of the people in there were [1:15:00] from Wales, Scotland, and they were all basically under thirty. And there had been a big explosion in a coal mine up there. So, there is coal up there.

Right on the other side of the mountain, there's a little town called Roslyn, Washington. And that's a place where, I'm told, a lot of blacks were brought into Roslyn as scab labor to break the backs of the union. And I had a couple of fellows who have passed on now, but told me that they were kids when they were brought out here. And they left there, and then, right over here in Kennydale, a section across the lake over there, the Kennydale section of Renton, those coal mining—

DC: Cannondale section?

SM: Kennydale, K-E-N-N-Y-D-A-L-E. And there's a vein of coal that runs right under maybe where we're sitting now, right on out in the Puget Sound. So then, you see, there were the four railroads that ended out here, the shipping lines across the Pacific. All of these are things that brought people here. Many who came here for the military stayed. Our church was organized, so I'm told, by a group of people from the Memphis, Tennessee, area. So, it's interesting. I forgot what it was you asked me.

DC: You said that when you got out here, on the surface, things seemed better or relatively good.

SM: It appeared to be, but—

DC: But I'm guessing there was something below the surface.

SM: Yeah, there was. I remember some places where we tried to eat, and I had to remind them that they weren't where they came from. They may not want to feed me, and if they didn't want to feed me, I didn't want to eat their food anyhow, because I don't—because I know some of the things that were done in retaliation to that sort of thing, and I wouldn't want to eat any tainted food myself.

DC: Um-hmm.

SM: But we had difficulty finding a house at first, not this one. But I didn't want to stay in the church parsonage, because we needed all of that to expand the church. But I would call around to see—I'd seen advertisements of houses, and I'd call and ask about them. And somebody would ask me, "Are you colored?"

DC: They'd just ask straight-out?

SM: Yeah, maybe they could get it out of my voice. I tried to mask it, but now my wife called. And she was in education and she was a purist when it came to language. And she was more English in her speech and pronunciation than the British themselves. So, then we saw several times when we showed up, it was a different story. So, that was here. That was right here in Seattle.

DC: Um-hmm.

SM: We did have some strikes and other things against the big department store downtown years ago. It was Frederick & Nelson. Nordstrom's now is in the building where Frederick & Nelson was. But when we marched on Frederick & Nelson, that opened them up to employment.

DC: Who were your allies in this kind of work? Was Seattle organized at all?

SM: Oh, yeah.

DC: What organizations were here?

SM: Well, there was the Urban League, the NAACP. There was—[1:20:00]

DC: Did CORE have a presence here?

SM: Later.

DC: Later.

SM: Yeah. They had a presence later on. But historically, the NAACP and the Urban League were on the ground, so to speak.

[Recording stops and then resumes]

JB: We're back.

DC: I know that in 1963, you were part of the group that organized, but became known as the CACRC, if you could tell us what that stood for.

SM: What was that?

DC: This was the community group that sort of drew from other groups to pull you all together to organize.

SM: Central Area?

DC: Yeah, exactly. I only wrote down the acronym, so—[laughs]

SM: Central Area.

DC: Let's see if I have it right here. [Shuffles paper] Central Area Civil Rights Committee.

SM: Yeah. Yeah, that was a group that was made up of all the groups, and it was Reverend John Adams who was pastor of First AME at the time, was the most successful leader

of that group. He's now a retired bishop in the AME Church living in Atlanta. And we did quite a few things. Had a school strike. Kids stayed home from school.

DC: Um-hmm. So, schools were segregated prior to that?

SM: Attitudinally.

DC: Okay.

SM: They weren't the best. They thought they were. But my wife spent her whole career here in Seattle in the school district. Yeah, it was under the auspices of the Central Area Civil Rights Committee that a lot of good was done in organizing the community and people. And we really had two fronts. One was working in harmony with groups that were struggling in the South, and also dealing with whatever vestiges of segregation and racism we encountered here. Someone said at that time the difference between the South and the North. The South didn't care how close blacks and whites got, so long as we didn't get too high. The North didn't care how high we got, provided we didn't get too close. [Laughs] So, I think that sums it up to a great extent.

They had—the state had a group. I'm trying to think of the first part of the name, but the last part was Against Racial Discrimination, or something to that effect, and they would deal with things legally. But they were kind of slow in—because you had to prove that you had really been mistreated.

DC: Right. So, there was a need for other kinds of activism?

SM: Um-hmm.

DC: Um-hmm.

SM: But I think the big march on Frederick & Nelson really opened up a lot of doors. I remember one fellow, he was a member of our congregation, and he was highly critical of me

and my participation, and told us we shouldn't march against Frederick & Nelson. But when we did and were successful, he was one of the first persons who applied for a job.

DC: [Laughs] Now, there's always going to be some people who think you're too radical, and then, there are others who think you're not radical enough.

SM: Oh, yeah.

DC: So, I know that towards the end of [1:25:00] '68, '69, there were some more radical groups that began to form in Seattle, including a chapter of the Black Panther Party. How did you all work with them?

SM: Not too well.

DC: Not too well?

SM: Um-um.

JB: What was—?

SM: Go ahead.

JB: What was the axis of conflict?

SM: Ahm. It could have been generational. It could have been they felt we were moving too slow, or some of their white support felt that we needed to get out of the way so they could come more to the fore. And some of us tried to ignore it, because it looked like somebody trying to play off one group against the other, and they hadn't gotten up off of anything. And I think the Panthers could have been more effective than they were.

DC: Did you understand it, where they were coming from, at all? Or was that—did it seem like just the wrong approach to you?

SM: I thought I knew where they were coming from. And then, some of them saw the ministers as their enemies more than discrimination. And some of us were the targets of some of their anger and venom. But some of them have matured, grown up, and they're still here.

DC: Um-hmm. Time moves on. [Laughs]

SM: Right.

DC: Yeah. Can you tell us a little bit—I think we'll probably wrap up pretty soon, but—about some of your other work, your later work? And I'm particularly interested in your work with Liberty Bank or the industrial center. And I know that there is now the Samuel Berry McKinney Manor, if you could tell us about that.

SM: Well, one of the things I noticed when I came, and one of the things that interested me, was that the church wanted to build. That's something I wanted to do. So, when those two things can hook up, we can go forward. And we were able to—but we needed to buy up some land, and we did. And we were able to build a new church by our plans so you could have parking. Someone said, "If a church can park the cars and babysit the children, it can grow. Otherwise, it will plateau." So, we tried to do that.

And we look at our sister church down the street, First AME, that now are completely surrounded by apartments, people coming back to the city who ran away from it. That's what gentrification is all about. It's not talking about poor whites coming back. It's the gentry. [Laughs] And so, we know the difference. And we were able at Mount Zion to buy up quite a bit of property, and I think that aided in the survival.

So, one of the first things we did when we came is to set it up so the church *could* buy the land. We also established a credit union in the church so people could take care of their own needs, and also, when we got ready to build the sanctuary unit, we didn't get money from one

single local bank. So, we just had the help of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, as well as people borrowing from the credit union.

DC: Um-hmm. So, the local banks just flat-out refused you? [1:30:00]

SM: Yeah, on that part.

DC: On that part.

SM: But then, we took advantage of some of the government programs, and that's how we were able to build the Manor. Now, another piece, between 2nd and Jackson is the Seattle Vocational Institute. But that venue was initially the Seattle OIC, Opportunities Industrialization Center. I was the president of that. And Dr. Leon Sullivan of Philadelphia started that movement to train and educate people. And we put up that building, but when Reagan became president, he pulled the rug out from under a lot of those community efforts to better themselves.

And Jim McDermott, who was a representative from the state, stepped in. And where we were on the verge of bankruptcy, he had the state to take over, buy it and give that to wipe out any debt that we owed, and also for the community colleges to have their facility, which is there now.

DC: Okay.

SM: Also, another program, CAMP, Central Area Motivation Program. And now that others have come to take it over and changed the name from CAMP to Center Hope, they say that they are there to help the new poor.

DC: Center Hope?

SM: Center Hope, or something like that. So, I've been involved in a lot of those community efforts. I was a part of the group that helped organized the Liberty Bank, which later went out of business, and the facility that it built at 24th and Union—I rode by there today. I may

be in a little trouble, because they said they were going to close that facility, and I've got a safety deposit box in there that I don't know what—

DC: What's going to happen to it?

SM: Tomorrow I'm going to get on that first thing. So, I have been involved in doing what I feel is a lot of good around the city and community, not only protesting, but also building.

DC: Um-hmm. And you see all these different kinds of works on different fronts as connected, as part of the same body of work?

SM: Yes. And one of the questions, one of the problems we have to face now is how you have community when you no longer have neighborhoods. And I'm looking at our—the Jewish community has dealt with that, and some of the Asian communities, where they are scattered and may not—there are some points where they are united. I know I spoke at the church. I speak annually. They call it Pastor Emeritus Sunday. But I think it was a couple of years ago. What I was speaking about—the idea just hit me. I asked, "How many of you live within a mile of the church?" And the further I got away from the—here we're ten miles—the more people we encountered. And I began to think about that.

DC: It would have been the opposite when the church was first being established?

SM: Well, no. The church moved to 19th and Madison in 1920. And they built an old—built a facility there then, which we replaced in '74. We put an education unit on first, but there are those who ran from the neighborhood. But historically, there were two areas, [1:35:00] one off of Madison and 24th and 25th, there's a pocket of blacks, and then over on Jackson, there's another pocket. And I've seen those two grow together, which they call now the Central Area. Now, but I think there were some who were glad to see it change because too much power,

political power, was being developed there. Many of the churches are there. There are some that are springing up in other places. But that was the historical community.

And I notice that on Sunday we have people, members who live out this way, north and south. And after church, they like to mix and mingle, because they haven't seen folks that they used to see at the grocery store. You don't see them anymore. In fact, when I first came, I upon another method of ministering to people, there were several fairly good-sized supermarkets in the Central Area. And sometimes when I was in some of them on business people would come up to me from the church to ask questions, or some would say, "I won't be there Sunday. Put this in; here's my offering to put in." And so, I just started some Friday evenings and early Saturdays just hanging around the supermarkets. And people would invariably come up, and we would talk. But they have torn up a lot of that. And the largest number of blacks moving into the Central Area now are from various sections of the African continent.

DC: Okay.

SM: So, just before I retired, I was asked to come to a meeting. And you know how some people are when they think they have a heavy to drop on you?

DC: Um-hmm.

SM: "Do you know that African Americans are now the number three nonwhite group in the community?" And other things that were supposed to—I guess I was supposed to have been stretched out on the floor, crying and hollering. And after he had gone through that, he wanted a reaction, because I don't think he was getting the one he expected.

DC: [Laughs]

SM: And I said, "Well, first of all, you say that Hispanics are now the largest single group." I said, "But the thing that unites the Hispanic community, as I understand it, is not

ethnicity but tongue, so you have a lot of black Hispanics. Now, how do you figure that? Or how do you deal with that?" Well, that wasn't what he was expecting. And I said, "Now, you're comparing us, all the blacks, against—no, no, one segment of the blacks against, like, all the Asians. And all the Latinas/Latinos and Hispanics are not all united, depending on where they came from, or what part of Mexico they came from, or whether they came from Chile or Argentina or Cuba. See, all of those things figure in."

And then, we talked about the people from the various parts of the African continent. And I said, "Africa is not a country. It's a continent. And you have as many varying differences among blacks as you do among whites." Then he wanted to know, "How did you know all of this?" [Laughs] I said, "I live here!" I said, "You know what you claim you know. But we just want to set the record straight, so you'll know what's going on." I told him that some of the Ethiopians before they built their church had certain events at our church. I told him I was aware of—[1:40:00] they're small, but four Haitian churches in West Seattle. "Oh?" I said, "Oh, you didn't know that?" [Laughs]

But [what is the Central Area is] very desirous piece of property. My wife found this place. But I was telling people, "Don't sell your property in the Central Area. It's valuable." And I kept a mailbox up there at 23rd and Union. And at least once a week or twice a month, someone says to me, "Aren't you the fellow that told us not to sell our property?" I say, "Yes." "But you left." I say, "Well, did you see the picture of *The Godfather*?" They say, "Yeah." I say, "Well, I was given an offer I couldn't refuse."

DC: [Laughs]

SM: So, we, in 1958, moved to where we lived for forty-two years in the Madrona area.

DC: Okay, that's where you were? Yeah.

SM: And then, my wife felt that we needed another place, and she found this. And if a wife is happy, you can make it.

DC: [Laughs]

SM: That's her picture right there. She passed in August.

JB: Oh.

DC: Umm.

SM: Yeah.

DC: And was a real partner of yours in your ministry and activism and everything, I understand.

SM: Um-hmm, she had her own life in education, and I didn't fool with—she was the expert there. And she found this place and left her mark on it. And the people we bought the house from, we know them, and they came back one day and didn't recognize it. She put these floors in.

DC: It's beautiful.

SM: And the windows, because they used to rattle [laughs] when we first came here. Got a nice view here.

DC: It's beautiful. Well, anything that we didn't talk about, or that I didn't ask that you'd like to add?

SM: Umm. [Pause] Umm. I can rattle on.

DC: [Laughs]

SM: What is it? Could there be some areas that you feel that should have been touched or dealt with?

DC: Well, I think we've covered quite a lot.

SM: I know, but I might have missed some of the main things.

JB: Well, you have a long perspective on the Movement, what's happened in your lifetime. Can you say something about what progress has been made or what still needs to be done?

SM: Umm. A lot of progress has been made. Some people feel that Obama's election should sum it all up. But I have never seen or expected some of the reaction, some of the things that have been said about Obama that, if they had been said about Bush, who I feel was the worst president we've *ever* had, from the beginning up to this time. They tolerated him. And Obama has bent over, too much I feel, to try to placate folks who have no intention for working with him, because they would rather see the country suffer than for him to claim any credit for any good that has been done. And I just want to—I think he could take a couple of pages from Roosevelt's book: If you don't cooperate, your district will suffer."

And I can see people now trying to get in position to play blacks and Latinos off one against each other. [1:45:00] But that's an old trick. And many things were pulled to try to defeat Obama, but they did not count on the coming together of folks they ignored and still think that they can just talk to them and talk to other groups, and they will fall in with them. The Asian communities are some of the most highly trained and educated in the country, and you can't buy them off with b.s. You have to put up or shut up. And it's becoming more that way with some of the Hispanic/Latino communities. And we need to all come together and find out who really wants to go in the direction we feel is best for the nation. And I think they found out that many of the people thirty and under have more in common than the Tea Partiers, whoever they are.

It's interesting. It's going to be more interesting as we go along. And I'm just curious to where Obama is going to take us. I'm willing to go along with him, and I think most people who think, or are capable of thinking, will do likewise.

JB: Well, I hope so.

DC: [Laughs] I hope so, too.

SM: And I also have the feeling that there are those who say, "Well, now, we experimented. A black man was president. Now, it's time for a woman to be president." And I'm sure that Mrs. Clinton would make a good president. If that's the way we're headed, and I think we are, there's hope for us. And I'm just praying every day that the nuts and the fools out there, who feel that their lives depend upon the right to have a gun and shoot it, or be seen with one, will come to their senses. I'm just praying that sense, which is not common to everybody, [laughs] will prevail.

DC: [Laughs] Will prevail, amen.

JB: Yeah, that's right.

SM: So, what are you going to do with all this stuff?

DC: Well, it's going to—well, first of all, let me just thank you very much, again, for sharing your story with us and for your work. The material is all going to go into the Library of Congress.

[Recording ends at 1:48:53]

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed by Sally C. Council